

## CLAIMS

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1. A portable computing device comprising:  
a keyboard controller having a first input for receiving keystroke inputs and  
5 having an output for conveying said keystroke inputs to a main processor; and  
a secondary processor having an interface to said keyboard controller through a  
secondary bus, said secondary bus also being used to communicate with a battery  
module, wherein said keyboard controller also conveys said keystroke inputs to said  
secondary processor through said secondary bus.  
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2. The portable computing device of claim 1 wherein said secondary bus is an  
I2C bus.
3. The portable computing device of claim 1 wherein said keyboard controller  
15 additionally receives inputs from a graphical pointing device that directs an indicator to  
move correspondingly about a computer screen.
4. The portable computing device of claim 1 wherein said secondary processor  
includes an interface to a database that stores a plurality of names and corresponding  
20 contact information.
5. The portable computing device of claim 1 wherein said secondary processor  
includes an interface to a network interface, said secondary processor executing a World  
Wide Web browsing function in association with said network interface.  
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6. The portable computing device of claim 1 wherein said secondary processor  
includes an interface to a shared audio subsystem.
7. A method for operating a portable computing device in a low-power mode,  
30 comprising:  
receiving keystroke inputs by a keyboard controller;

said keyboard controller transmitting said keystroke inputs to a secondary bus, said secondary bus also being used to communicate with a battery module; and

said keyboard controller refraining from transmitting said keystroke inputs to a main processor, thereby operating said portable computing device in said low-power mode.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said secondary bus is an I2C bus.

9. The method of claim 7 further comprising said keyboard controller receiving inputs from a graphical pointing device that directs an indicator to move correspondingly about a computer screen of said portable computing device.

10. The method of claim 7 further comprising a secondary processor, which interfaces to said secondary bus, searching a database that stores a plurality of names and corresponding contact information.

11. The method of claim 10 further comprising said secondary processor communicating with a network and executing a World Wide Web browser function in association with said network.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said secondary processor executes a Java application program.

13. In a keyboard controller, a method for operating a portable computing device, comprising:

receiving keystroke inputs by a keyboard controller;

determining if said portable computing device should be operated in a low-power mode;

said keyboard controller transmitting said keystroke inputs to a secondary bus, said secondary bus also being used to communicate with a battery module; and

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said keyboard controller refraining from transmitting said keystroke inputs to a main processor based on said determining action, thereby operating said portable computing device in said low-power mode.

5 14. The method of claim 13 wherein said secondary bus is an I2C bus.

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15. The method of claim 13 further comprising said keyboard controller receiving inputs from a graphical pointing device that directs an indicator to move correspondingly about a computer screen of said portable computing device.

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16. The method of claim 13 further comprising a secondary processor, coupled to said secondary bus, searching a database that stores a plurality of names and corresponding contact information.

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17. The method of claim 16 further comprising said secondary processor communicating with a network and executing a World Wide Web browser function in association with said network.

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18. In a portable computing device which executes a power on system test (POST) program, wherein said POST program accesses a data structure resident in a memory element used by said POST program, wherein said data structure includes a plurality of data objects which instruct a keyboard controller to execute a method which comprises:

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determining if said portable computing device is to be operated in a low power mode;

said keyboard controller receiving keystroke inputs;

transmitting said keystroke inputs to a secondary bus, said secondary bus also being used to communicate with a battery module; and

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said keyboard controller refraining from transmitting said keystroke inputs to a main processor based on said determining action, thereby operating said portable computing device in said low-power mode.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein said secondary bus is an I2C bus.

20. The method of claim 18 further comprising said keyboard controller receiving inputs from a graphical pointing device that directs an indicator to move correspondingly about a computer screen of said portable computing device.

21. The method of claim 18 further comprising a secondary processor, coupled to said secondary bus, searching a database that stores a plurality of names and corresponding contact information.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising said secondary processor communicating with a network and executing a World Wide Web browser function in association with said network.

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